In response to the Office Action of May 20, 2003, please amend the application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A stable pharmaceutical composition containing a therapeutically effective amount of a [small or medium size] peptide or of a pharmaceutically acceptable derivative thereof selected from the group consisting of derivatives and analogues of oxytocin and vasopressin and the salts thereof and further containing a buffer in aqueous solution, wherein it is free from [preservatives] adsorption inhibitors preventing adsorption of the active principle onto container walls and free from antioxidants and antimicrobial additives.

2. (Currently Amended) A stable pharmaceutical composition consisting of a therapeutically effective amount of a [small or medium size] peptide or of a pharmaceutically acceptable derivative thereof selected from the group consisting of derivatives and analogues of oxytocin and vasopressin and the salts thereof and of a buffer in aqueous solution.

Claims 3-9 (CANCELLED)

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The ~~S~~stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim [9] 1, wherein the peptide is selected from the group consisting of the analogues of vasopressin, and the salts thereof.

11. (Currently Amended) The ~~S~~stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim [10] 3, wherein the analogue of vasopressin contains a mercaptopropanoyl radical.

12. (Currently Amended) The ~~S~~stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim [11] 5, wherein the analogue of vasopressin is desmopressin acetate hydrate.

13. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1 ~~or 2~~, having a pH comprised between 3.5 and 6.

14. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, [containing a] wherein the buffer is selected from the group consisting of citric acid/disodium phosphate dihydrate and citric acid/trisodium citrate dihydrate.

15. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 2, [further containing a] wherein the buffer is selected from the group consisting of citric acid/disodium phosphate dihydrate and citric acid/trisodium citrate dihydrate.

16. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, containing an agent for controlling the osmolarity.

17. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 2, further containing an agent for controlling the osmolarity.

18. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim [16] 12, wherein the agent for controlling the osmolarity is sodium chloride.

19. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1, containing at least 0.02 mg of desmopressin, at least 3 mg of [a] the buffer, and an amount of an agent for controlling the osmolarity such that the osmolarity is kept at the physiologic values of the human plasma, and 1 ml of purified water.

20. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 2, containing at least 0.02 mg of desmopressin, and containing at least 3 mg of [a] the buffer, and further containing an amount of an agent for controlling the osmolarity such that the osmolarity is kept at the physiologic values of the human plasma, in 1 ml of purified water.

21. (Currently Amended) The Sstable pharmaceutical composition according to

claim [19] 15, containing from 3 to 6 mg of citric acid/disodium phosphate dihydrate buffer, or from 5 to 11 mg of citric acid/trisodium citrate dihydrate buffer.

22. (Currently Amended) The ~~S~~stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim [19] 15, containing from 0.02 to 0.15 mg of desmopressin, from 1 to 2.5 mg of citric acid monohydrate, from 2 to 5 mg of disodium phosphate dihydrate, 1 ml of water and an amount of sodium chloride such that the osmolarity is kept at the physiologic values of the human plasma.

23. Currently Amended) The ~~S~~stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim [22] 18, containing 0.1 mg of desmopressin, 1.7 mg of citric acid monohydrate, 3 mg of disodium phosphate dihydrate, 1 ml of water and an amount of sodium chloride such that the osmolarity is kept at the physiologic values of the human plasma.

24. (Currently Amended) The ~~S~~stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 21, containing 0.1 mg of desmopressin, and [further] containing 1.7 mg of citric acid monohydrate, 3 mg of disodium phosphate dihydrate, in 1 ml of water and further an amount of sodium chloride such that the osmolarity is kept at the physiologic values of the human plasma.

Claims 25-30 (Withdrawn from Consideration)

31. (New) The stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 2, wherein the peptide is selected from the group consisting of the analogues of vasopressin, and the salts thereof.

32. (New) The stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 4, wherein the analogue of vasopressin contains a mercaptopropanoyl radical.

33. (New) The stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 6, wherein the analogue of vasopressin is desmopressin acetate hydrate.

34. (New) A stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 16, containing from 3 to 6 mg. of citric acid/disodium phosphate dihydrate buffer, or from 5 to 11 mg. of citric acid/trisodium citrate dihydrate buffer.

35. (New) A stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 16, containing from 0.02 to 0.15 mg of desmopressin, from 1 to 2.5 mg., of citric acid monohydrate from 2 to 5 mg of disodium phosphate dihydrate, 1 ml of water and further an amount of sodium chloride such that the osmolarity is kept at the physiologic values of the human plasma.

36. (New) The stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 2 having a pH comprised between 3.5 and 6.

37. (New) The stable pharmaceutical composition according to claim 13 wherein the agent for controlling the osmolarity is sodium chloride.

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Page 1, lines 11-21, on line 13 thereof, the word "even" is replaced by the word "only".

A remarkable number of peptides, derivatives and analogues thereof are known in therapy. They are often endowed with an utterly powerful biologic activity, therefore ~~even~~ only very small amounts are required for therapeutic goals. Among these, small and medium size peptides, preferably small or medium size cyclic peptides, more preferably those containing one or more sulfur atoms within the cyclus, and most preferably those containing at least two sulfur atoms within the cyclus...

In the paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4, "oxitocin" should be "oxytocin".

The peptide of the composition of the present invention is selected from small or medium size peptides, preferably from small or medium size cyclic peptides, more preferably from small or medium size cyclic peptides containing one or more sulfur atoms within the cyclus, and most preferably from small or medium size cyclic peptides containing at least two sulfur atoms within the cyclus, and the pharmaceutically acceptable derivatives (like e.g., salts or esters) thereof. The most preferred peptides of the composition of the present invention are selected from the group consisting of derivatives and analogues of ~~oxitocin~~ oxytocin and vasopressin such as, for example, terlipressin [N-α-triglycin8-lysin)-vasopressin], carbetocin [(1-desamino-1monocarba-2(O-methyl)tyrosine)-oxitocin], and desmopressin (1-deamino-8-D-arginin-vasopressin or 1-(3-mercaptopropanoic acid)-8-D-argininevasopressin), and the salts thereof. Among the foregoing most preferred peptides, particularly preferred for the aim of the present invention are the vasopressin analogues, more in particular those analogues containing a mercaptopropanyl radical, desmopressin acetate hydrate being the most preferred.